

[Louis Larsen]

[?] DUP

Week No.

Item No.

Words

[Percent

Received

Accredited

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FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Harley Anderson ADDRESS Niobrara, Nebr.

DATE January 28, 1939 SUBJECT Farm Holiday songs

1. Name and address of informant Louis W. Larsen
2. Date and time of interview Jan. 28, 1939, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
3. Place of interview At his farm ten miles east of town
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant Moratz Kemp, Niobrara, Nebraska

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5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you Moratz Kemp
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. The farm consists of 240 acres of land very hilly.

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Harley Anderson ADDRESS Niobrara, Nebraska

DATE Jan 28, 1939 SUBJECT Farm Holiday songs

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Louis W. Larsen

1. Ancestry - Danish extraction
2. Place and date of birth - Omaha, Nebr., April 30, 1885
3. Family - Wife and 2 girls and 2 boys
4. Place lived in, with dates - Nebraska except 1 year 6 mo. in Penn.
5. Education, with dates - High school
6. Occupations and accomplishments - Farming, plant and florist
7. Special skills and interests - plant propagation a hobby, writing a hobby and farming a vocation
8. Community and religious activities - [Golden?] rule
9. Description of informant - Stout blond and friendly disposition

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10. Other points gained in interview - Feels the masses are victims of a planned exploitation by a viscious class of legal bandits.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Harley Anderson ADDRESS Niobrara, Nebr.

DATE January 28, 1939 SUBJECT Farm Holiday season

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Louis W. Larsen

In 1933 due to the economical condition the people seemed to rise in one accord in self defense and staged marches on various State Capitols in protest against threatened persecution by the wealthy corporations, Banks and many individuals. And a large group known as Farmer's Holiday became organized to stop forced sales evictions and foreclosures of homes, and in this movement songs pertinent to conditions were composed and sung to the relief of the expression of the many people. As to myself farming never appealed to me but being only son I sacrificed a personal desire to write and become a commercial florist to stay on and help with the farm work, in other words I feel I have been a peg in square hole and never really fitted my place to best advantage for personal advancement.

Here are some of his' songs:

Tune: Nellie Grey. In the commonwealth that is to be. In the gloom of mighty cities mid the roar of whirling wheels. We are toiling on like cities mid the roar of whirling wheels. We are toiling on like chattel slaves of old and our masters hope to keep us ever thus beneath their heels. And to coin our very life blood into gold.

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Cho. Oh we have a glorious dream of how fair this world would seem When each man
can live his life secure and free When the earth is owned by labor and there is joy and
peace for all In the commonwealth that is to be. They would keep us [cowed?] and cringing
meekly at their feet. They would stand between each worker and his bread. Shall we give
our lives up to them for the bitter crust we eat Shall we only hope for heaven when we're
dead. Cho. When our

caus cause is all triumphant and we claim our mother earth And the nightmare of the
present fades away We will live with love and laughter. We who now are little worth And
we'll not got the price we had to pay.

Our Country 'tis of Thee The land that once was free Of Thee we sing Land where our
fathers died And now lay side by side They had such hope and pride For freedom's swing.
From Europe's countries old Came some in steerage hold For Freedom's sake

3

They hoped to find surcease And live in love and peace And freedom take They spread
oe'r planes far flung With toil and heartache wring A home was brought With suffering and
with toil. They finally tilled the soil A few of them found some oil A good fight fought. Then
came some who sought To [?] this wealth for naught Our fathers earned -They'd lie they'd
steal and cheat They grabbed our corn and wheat They changed our laws to beat Our
rights they spurned Their country 'tis of Thee Where once was liberty We still do love They
own they rocks and rills Thy mines and timbered hills Our hearts with sorrow filled Like him
above.

4

Now we have no more homes And like the wild beast roams From earth to sky They own
this loved land A tiny rob-ber band Shall we not make our stand To live or die.

—by [?]. W. Larsen

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Why Oh Why Why, oh Why should my brother die Why should my mother sit and cry And
father, old with worry, sigh Can you, kind sir, please tell me why? We were so happy,
every day As around our door and hearth did play Were carefree, jolly and always gay
And now this sorrow has come our way Can you, kind sir, please tell me why? We were so
happy, every day As around our door and hearth did play Were carefree, jolly and always
gay And now this sorrow has come our way Can you, kind sir, please tell me why?

5

We have no enemies at all Were always ready at friendships call With helping hands when
ills befall But how our joys in life did fall Can you, kind sir, please tell me why? They took
my brother away from me. He had to go, he was not free To fight for them far over the sea
This terrible thing, I cannot see Can you, kind sir, please tell me why? My father said, it's
because of gold In other lands that rich men hold And so for their wealth our sons are sold
And slaughtered for that bloody gold Can you, kind sir, please tell me why? Do our lives
and joys to them mean naught? Is life so cheap and [easy?] bought Where's the right and
justice our forebears sought And the life and liberty for which they fought Can you, kind
sir, please tell me? Did God send then our brothers there To slay some other's brother
fair And fill our mothers with despair Oh, no? oh, no, I breathe in prayer Can you, kind sir,
please tell me why?

6

Oh, no, dear child, God does no wrong But the rich by tricks control the throng And rule
the fate of all along The way. They just seem strong And that, dear child, is why. Their lust
for gold is more to them Than liberty or lives of men We are but dirt beneath their feet For
gold they lie, they steal, and cheat Even such as you, my child. My child, when people
learn their might And stand together for their right And brotherhood, with true foresight Will
answer you, my child. Let all them hasten for that day, Refuse to enter any fray In foreign
lands for gold to slay Another's brother in the way Like yours, my child, like yours. We

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have the might. We have the right Alone for homes and kin to fight We must be strong,
protect the weak For life and love our homes to seek And bring back joy, my child.

7

We have a duty to perform We must arise before the storm Destroys and leaves us all
forlorn And bloody by its madness torn To guard you children all Make haste, away, away
Stop madmen who just live to slay And make a better world always From out the ashes of
today For such as you, my child.